



CITY OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS  
Office of the Mayor

**Thomas M. Menino**

**Emergency Shelter Commission  
Jim Greene, Executive Director  
Annual Homeless Census December 18, 2006**

## **Executive Summary**

The City of Boston's annual count of the homeless held on December 18, 2006 once again demonstrated the extreme need for affordable housing for at risk and vulnerable low-income populations. The 2006-2007 Homeless Census identifies 6,636 homeless men, women and children, a 4% increase over the 2005-2006 count. This growth in homeless persons reflects a mixed picture of successful efforts to end homelessness for unsheltered chronic homeless populations and a mounting challenge for low-income families who are homeless in Boston as well as throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires all Continuum of Care to conduct an annual point-in-time survey of the homeless men, women and children in Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing programs, Domestic Violence shelters and the unsheltered street population. The City of Boston's annual homeless census has for many years included in its count homeless people staying temporarily in other types of facilities and programs, such as medical respite beds, recovery homes for people with chemical dependency issues and hospital inpatient units., HUD does not include these other programs in its point-in-time count. Thus, the homeless data presented to HUD constitutes a subset of the larger population of homeless households that the City of Boston presents in this document.

### **KEY FINDINGS**

- The census counted 6,636 men, women and children who were homeless in Boston, an increase of 4% over last year's count of 6,365.
- The number of families who were homeless increased by 13% or 311 families.
- While the number of individuals who were homeless decreased only slightly by 1% or 40 people the gender and age distributions of these individuals shifted significantly with an 85% increase in women living on the streets and a 65% decrease in persons over the age of 55 on the street.

## **FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNES**

### **Women, Men and Children in Families Increase**

The total number of homeless adults and children in families was 2,636, a 13% increase over 2,325 last year. Of the 2,636, there were 2,054 adults and children in congregate and scattered site family shelters or sheltered outside of the City of Boston this year, a 17% increase over last year's 1,704 people in the family category.

### **Women and Children in Domestic Violence Situations Relatively Similar**

Domestic violence shelter occupancy decreased by 10% from 213 women and children last year to 191 this year. One domestic violence program previously serving Boston moved out of the city which may account for this decline.

### **Total Family Households Increase**

The total number of family households in shelter, domestic violence programs and transitional programs increased again in 2006. The more than 907 households marks a 22% increase over 746 households in 2005 and an 80% increase over the 505 households in 2004.

## **INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESS**

### **Total Individuals Experiencing Homelessness**

The 4,000 homeless men and women living on the streets and in all residential facilities identified in the census represents a 1% decline over the 4,040 individuals counted in 2005. The number of homeless individuals in emergency shelters decreased by 5%.

### **Individuals Living on the Street Increase**

Perhaps due in part to warm winter weather and limited availability of substance abuse and mental health services, the number of unsheltered people living on the street increased by 17% from 261 to 306 persons.

### **Elderly Street Homelessness Declines for Second Consecutive Year**

For the second year since Mayor Menino issued a call for increased housing assistance and services coordination, the number of elderly and near-elderly persons living on Boston's streets without shelter is believed to have declined. The number of older adults, people over the age of 55, decreased by 37% from 44 to 28. This represents a 64% decline from 77 older adults counted during the census two years ago.

### **Women Living on Street Increases Dramatically**

Despite the overall decline of people living on the street, the number of women increased by 85% from 34 to 63 this year. It may be worth noting that the number of women who were in inpatient hospitals also more than doubled, from 17 to 36, a 112% increase.

### **Veteran Population Remains Consistent**

There were 18 self-identified veterans counted on the night of the census comparable to the 17 identified during last year's census.

### **Adults in Emergency Shelter Decrease**

The number of adults in emergency shelter decreased by 15% in 2006 with 1,457 individuals down from 1,716 individuals in 2005. Over the past two years, this number has decreased by 24%, from a record high of 1,913 individuals in 2004, while the street numbers have fluctuated.

### **Homeless in Hospitals at Lower Level for Second Consecutive Year**

There were 183 homeless men and women in hospital emergency room or inpatient hospital beds during the 2006 census compared to 176 in 2005, an increase of 4%. For the second year in a row, this number is well below the high 2004-2005 count of 302 people. The number of homeless persons in medical care facilities has returned to roughly the level seen in 2002, before Medicaid coverage and substance abuse treatment bed cuts created sharp increases of inpatient hospital admissions.

This 39% decrease represents a significant cost savings in approach; a hospital stay can cost \$1,000 per day per bed, and emergency room, emergency medical services and ambulance costs add significantly to that total. Cuts to Mass Health and detox programs leave homeless people with costly emergency hospital care as the only option. By comparison, the cost of treatment beds ranges from \$75 per day for recovery homes or halfway houses to \$150 per day for transitional beds to \$250 per day for detox beds.. Longer-term residential care provides greater stability than discharge to the streets or shelters after a hospital stay. Thus, substance abuse treatment beds provide both lower-cost and longer-term care.

As illustrated in the 2005-2006 Homeless Census Report, it is important to link the decrease in substance abuse funding and higher cost hospital-based care. State funding cuts beginning in 2003 resulted in the loss of 50% of acute substance abuse detox beds, the effect of which is still experienced not only by homeless individuals with alcohol and other drug addiction illnesses, but by housed individuals in need of treatment.

A Boston Health Care for the Homeless study indicates that 59% of the chronic street homeless population has co-occurring substance abuse, mental health and other major medical problems. Many homeless persons in shelters and transitional programs, as well as formerly homeless persons now housed also struggle with addictions and encounter difficulties in accessing treatment. Further restoration of substance abuse treatment beds, relapse prevention and other public health services is urgently needed.

## **COMPARISON: 2006/1996**

### **Decade-Long Homelessness Crisis Disproportionately Affects Women and Children**

In the past decade, Boston's homeless population increased by 36% from 4,896 in 1996-1997 to 6,636 in 2006-2007. Escalation in the rental market in the decade since the end of rent control, a steep decline in State rental housing subsidies and limited availability of new Federal Housing Choice vouchers are major factors in this increase.

The number of homeless children in Boston increased by 55% at 1,540 compared to 996 in 1996-1997. Similarly, during this period, the number of homeless women increased by 57% reaching 1,669 in 2006-2007 compared to 1,065 in 1996-1997. The number of homeless men in 2006-2007 reached 3,427 in 2006-2007 compared to 2,835 in 1996-1997, a 21% increase. In

December 2006 there was a ratio of 3,427 homeless men to 3,209 women and children in Boston's Continuum of Care, a split of 52% men to 48% women compared with 2,835 men and 2,061 women and children a decade ago, a split of 58% men to 42% women and children.

The ratio of homeless men to homeless women and children reaching parity reflects of the Commonwealth's growing crisis of family homelessness; this growth is a direct result of the loss of State rental housing subsidies, decreases in the Federal Section 8 program, and the long-term failure of Federal and State agencies to adequately fund public housing operating and capital costs. Additionally, a one-dimensional focus and prioritization on chronically homeless individuals in recent Federal McKinney-Vento homelessness assistance programs leaves low-income families in high housing cost regions like Massachusetts largely unaided and their plight unaddressed.

## People Living on the Street

	Winter 2006-2007			Winter 2005-2006		
	Male	Female	Children	Male	Female	Children
Street Count	243	63	-	227	34	-
<b>STREET COUNT TOTAL:</b>	<b>306</b>			<b>261</b>		

## Adults in Shelter

	Winter 2006-2007		Winter 2005-2006	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Kingston House	106	4	107	5
Long Island Shelter	372	41	372	50
Long Island Woods-Mullen	137	69	149	70
New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans	26	1	-	-
Pine Street Inn Men's Inn	279	-	343	-
--Women's Inn	-	73	-	76
--Boston Night Center	48	10	47	21
Rosie's Place	-	20	-	20
Sancta Maria	-	10	-	9
Shattuck Shelter	104	20	109	22
United Homes	137	-	122	7
<b>SUBTOTALS:</b>	<b>1209</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>1249</b>	<b>280</b>
<b>ADULT SHELTER TOTAL:</b>	<b>1457</b>		<b>1529</b>	

## Adult Transitional Programs

	Winter 2006-2007		Winter 2005-2006	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Betty's Place	-	15	-	15
BostonHomelessSvs				
--Project SOAR	56	33	70	20
--Safe Harbor	19	1	16	2
--Wise Street	10	-	8	-
Elders Living at Home	22	8	25	11
Eliot Tri City Safe Haven	-	5	-	6
Kingston House/BRM				
--Life Growth	32	4	-	-
--Post Detox	16	-	-	-
Salvation Army Harbor Lights	38	6	32	-
New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans	235	4	255	4
Pine Street Inn			56	
--Men's Transitional	55	-	-	-
--Women In Transition	-	37	-	-
--Anchor Inn	148	-	104	-
--Holy Family	60	-	62	-
--Engage	12	-	-	-
--Working Men's Program	18	-	-	-
St Francis Next Step	21	6	28	11
St. Francis Moving Ahead Program (MAP)	14	12	-	-
Shattuck Transitional (TIL) program	30	-	36	-
United Homes Transitional	8	9	24	10
Cardinal Medeiros YMCA	50	-	50	-
<b><i>SUBTOTALS:</i></b>	<b><i>844</i></b>	<b><i>140</i></b>	<b><i>766</i></b>	<b><i>79</i></b>
<b>ADULT TRANSITIONAL TOTALS:</b>	<b>984</b>		<b>845</b>	

## Families in Shelter

FAMILY SHELTER	Winter 2006-2007			Winter 2005-2006		
	Male	Female	Children	Male	Female	Children
Boston Family	-	8	9	-	7	10
Casa Nueva Vida	-	16	27	1	16	21
Child Services Roxbury						
Millennium House	6	22	30	1	21	37
Crittenton-Women's Union Assessment Center	-	28	39	3	24	32
Crittenton-Women's Union Hastings House Congregate		56	56	-	60	64
Crossroads	6	13	24	4	11	18
Families-In-Transition	-	22	31	3	20	26
Family House	3	23	41	2	22	40
Hildebrand at Morse Street	2	19	29	2	18	16
LifeHouse	-	11	11	-	8	8
Margaret's House	-	32	36	-	31	38
Project Hope	-	11	11	-	8	10
Queen of Peace	-	2	1	-	9	-
Salvation Army	-	5	13	-	5	14
Sojourner House	1	8	13	1	9	11
St. Ambrose Inn	-	16	13	-	12	13
St. Mary's Home	-	16	16	-	17	15
New Chardon Temp. Home	-	11	14	-	13	15
Traveler's Aid F.E.S	2	7	18	3	16	24
<b>SUBTOTALS:</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>444</b>
<b>FAMILY SHELTER TOTALS:</b>	<b>778</b>			<b>818</b>		

SCATTERED SITE	Winter 2006-2007			Winter 2005-2006		
	Male	Female	Children	Male	Female	Children
Child Services Roxbury	18	86	240	20	61	186
Crittenton-Women's Union Community Housing	6	19	37	11	31	53
Hildebrand	16	41	63	10	27	61
Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership	21	55	151	23	52	134
Shelter, Inc	-	3	2	-	-	-
Traveler's Aid	13	38	84	4	17	45
<b>SUBTOTALS:</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>479</b>
<b>SCATTERED SITE TOTALS:</b>	<b>893</b>			<b>735</b>		

<b>SHELTERED OUTSIDE BOSTON</b>	<b>Winter 2006-2007</b>			<b>Winter 2005-2006</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Children</b>
Families in Shelter Outside Boston	35	115	233	14	91	170
<b><i>SUBTOTALS:</i></b>	<b><i>35</i></b>	<b><i>115</i></b>	<b><i>233</i></b>	<b><i>14</i></b>	<b><i>91</i></b>	<b><i>170</i></b>
<b>SHELTER OUTSIDE BOSTON TOTALS:</b>	<b>383</b>			<b>275</b>		

<b>FAMILY TRANSITIONAL</b>	<b>Winter 2006-2007</b>			<b>Winter 2005-2006</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Children</b>
Brookview House	-	12	29	-	12	26
Casa Esperanza Latinas Y Ninos	-	15	4	-	14	3
Crittenton-Women's Union	-	18	33	-	11	24
Horizons House I&II	-	4	6	-	-	-
Crittenton-WU TRAC	-	10	13	-	10	9
Dennis McLaughlin	-	12	8	-	13	1
Dimock Umami's	5	24	44	6	24	38
Dimock Mary Mahoney	-	10	9	-	7	5
Nazareth House	-	-	-	-	-	-
Victory Programs	-	4	6	-	5	6
--Portis Family House	-	22	22	-	21	20
--Revision House	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b><i>SUBTOTALS:</i></b>	<b><i>5</i></b>	<b><i>131</i></b>	<b><i>174</i></b>	<b><i>6</i></b>	<b><i>125</i></b>	<b><i>139</i></b>
<b>FAMILY TRANSITIONAL TOTALS:</b>	<b>310</b>			<b>270</b>		



## Domestic Violence Programs

	Winter 2006-2007		Winter 2005-2006	
	Female	Children	Female	Children
Asian Shelter Advocacy Project	12	8	10	9
Casa Myrna Vazquez	24	24	30	44
Dove, Inc.-Boston residents only	6	9	8	6
Elizabeth Stone House	19	21	27	29
FINEX	32	10	5	10
Renewal House	5	6	3	6
Transition House-Boston residents only	8	7	12	11
<b><i>SUBTOTALS:</i></b>	<b><i>106</i></b>	<b><i>85</i></b>	<b><i>95</i></b>	<b><i>115</i></b>
<b>D.V. TOTALS</b>	<b>191</b>		<b>210</b>	

## Adolescent Programs

	Winter 2006-2007			Winter 2005-2006		
	Male	Female	Children	Male	Female	Children
Bridge Trinity	4	4	-	2	3	-
Bridge-Coop Apts	2	5	4	2	5	2
Bridge Women's & Children's Residence	-	4	1	-	4	5
Bridge "Host Homes"	-	1	-	-	-	-
<b><i>SUBTOTALS:</i></b>	<b><i>6</i></b>	<b><i>14</i></b>	<b><i>5</i></b>	<b><i>4</i></b>	<b><i>12</i></b>	<b><i>7</i></b>
<b>A.P. TOTALS:</b>	<b>25</b>			<b>23</b>		

## Hospitals & Other Health Care

EMERGENCY ROOMS	Winter 2006-2007		Winter 2005-2006	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Beth Israel-Deaconess	-	-	-	-
Boston Medical Center	-	-	1	-
Brigham & Women's	1	-	3	-
Carney Hospital	-	-	-	-
Faulkner	-	-	-	-
Massachusetts General	-	-	4	1
New England Medical Center	-	-	-	-
St. Elizabeth's	-	-	-	-
<b><i>SUBTOTALS:</i></b>	<b><i>1</i></b>	<b><i>0</i></b>	<b><i>8</i></b>	<b><i>1</i></b>
<b>E.R. TOTALS:</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>9</b>	

HOSPITAL INPATIENT	Winter 2006-2007		Winter 2005-2006	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Beth Israel-Deaconess	3	-	1	-
Boston Medical Center	6	1	-	2
Brigham & Women's	6	1	6	-
Carney Hospital	1	-	-	-
Children's Hospital	-	-	-	-
Faulkner Hospital	3	-	2	-
VA	63	7	99	5
Massachusetts General	10	3	8	1
New England Medical Center	8	4	4	-
Shattuck Hospital	47	20	38	9
St. Elizabeth's	-	-	1	-
<b><i>SUBTOTALS:</i></b>	<b><i>147</i></b>	<b><i>36</i></b>	<b><i>159</i></b>	<b><i>17</i></b>
<b>INPATIENT TOTALS:</b>	<b>183</b>		<b>176</b>	

MEDICAL RESPITE	Winter 2006-2007		Winter 2005-2006	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Barbara M. McInnis House	67	15	80	12
<b><i>RESPITE TOTALS:</i></b>	<b><i>82</i></b>		<b><i>92</i></b>	
<b>ALL HEALTH CARE TOTALS:</b>	<b>266</b>		<b>277</b>	

## Mental Health Facilities

	Winter 2006-2007		Winter 2005-2006	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Bay View Inn	16	-	18	-
Fenwood Inn	27	8	24	10
Lindemann Inpatient	38	7	19	10
Metropolitan Boston Inpatient at Shattuck Hospital	79	32	85	26
Parker Street West	-	16	-	20
Solomon Carter Fuller Inpatient	-	-	17	-
St. Alphonsus Respite	4	-	1	1
West End Shelter	30	14	33	17
<b><i>SUB-TOTALS:</i></b>	<b><i>194</i></b>	<b><i>77</i></b>	<b><i>197</i></b>	<b><i>84</i></b>
<b>MENTAL HEALTH TOTALS:</b>	<b>271</b>		<b>281</b>	

## Detox and Substance Abuse Treatment

MEDICAL RESPITE	Winter 2006-2007		Winter 2005-2006	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Andrew House Detoxification	15	1	17	-
Bay Cove New Hope TSS	18	13	25	13
Bridge to Recovery	8	-	18	-
Dimock Detox	6	3	22	4
CAB Boston Treatment Center	23	10	22	5
ChildServicesRoxbury-United Homes PostDetox	7	6	18	-
Pine Street Post Detox	11	-	10	-
Shattuck Stabilization TSS	35	-	31	-
Transitions BPHC TSS	32	8	40	8
Women's Hope Post Detoxification	-	7	-	16
<b><i>SUB-TOTALS:</i></b>	<b><i>155</i></b>	<b><i>48</i></b>	<b><i>203</i></b>	<b><i>46</i></b>
<b>DETOX TOTALS:</b>	<b>203</b>		<b>249</b>	

## Residential Substance Abuse Treatment/Recovery Homes

ADULT INDIVIDUALS	Winter 2006-2007		Winter 2005-2006	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Answer House	24	-	22	-
Casa Esperanza Men's	25	-	21	-
Casa Esperanza Women's	-	-	-	-
Dimock John Flower's	18	-	11	-
Gavin House	31	-	16	-
Granada House	11	11	22	-
Hamilton House	24	-	21	-
Harbor Light	38	6	44	-
Harvard St./First Askia	25	-	28	-
Harvard St./Women's Circle	-	14	-	12
Volunteers of America Hello House	18	-	15	28
Hispanic Academy	17	-	15	-
Hope House	75	-	57	-
Interim House	18	-	18	-
Meridian House	4	6	11	9
New Victories	25	-	23	-
Rehabilitation & Health/Monmouth Sq.	13	-	9	-
Rehabilitation & Health/White Street	8	-	8	-
Victory/Shepard House	-	23	-	22
Sullivan House	24	-	20	-
Victory Programs/Transitional House	6	-	9	-
Victory Programs/Victory House	23	-	17	-
Victory Program's/Women's Hope	-	18 & 1G	-	7
Victory Programs/Yetman House	-	8	-	7
<b><i>SUBTOTAL ADULT INDIVIDUALS:</i></b>	<b><i>427</i></b>	<b><i>86 &amp; 1 G</i></b>	<b><i>387</i></b>	<b><i>85</i></b>

FAMILIES	Winter 2006-2007		Winter 2005-2006	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Entre Familia	-	14 & (10B/10G)	-	-
Griffin House	-	8 & (7B/6G)	-	12
<b><i>SUBTOTALS FAMILIES</i></b>		<b><i>22 &amp; (17B 16G)</i></b>		
<b><i>SUBTOTALS ALL RECOVERY:</i></b>	<b><i>427</i></b>	<b><i>108 &amp; 34 Children</i></b>	<b><i>387</i></b>	<b><i>97</i></b>
<b>RECOVERY TOTALS:</b>	<b>569</b>		<b>484</b>	

## Homeless Totals

	Winter 2006-2007			Winter 2005-2006		
	Male	Female	Children	Male	Female	Children
Street Count	243	63	-	227	34	-
Adult Shelters	1209	248	-	1249	280	-
Family Shelters	20	326	432	24	350	444
Family Scattered Site	74	242	577	68	188	479
Family outside Boston	35	115	233	14	91	170
Domestic Violence	-	106	85	-	95	115
Adolescent	6	14	5	4	12	7
Hospital ER	1	-	-	8	1	-
Hospital Inpatient	147	36	-	159	17	-
Medical Respite	67	15	-	80	12	-
Detox, post detox, TSS	155	48	-	203	46	-
Recovery Homes	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>For Individuals</i>	427	86	-	387	85	-
<i>For Families</i>	-	22	34	-	12	-
Mental Health	194	77	-	197	84	-
Transitional Housing	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>For Individuals</i>	844	140	-	766	79	-
<i>For Families</i>	5	131	174	6	125	139
<b><i>SUB-TOTALS:</i></b>	<b>3427</b>	<b>1669</b>	<b>1540</b>	<b>3392</b>	<b>1511</b>	<b>1354</b>
<b>GRAND-TOTALS:</b>	<b>6636</b>			<b>6257</b>		